

surveys have been conducted. Fifth round of survey was undertaken in April, 1993. 57 industries have been selected. Field surveys in 34 industries have been completed. Reports on 15 industries in 5 volumes have been published. Report on 10 industries is under finalisation and data for 9 industries is under tabulation. Field survey in respect of 10 more manufacturing industries is likely to be launched shortly.

9. *Repeat House Rent Survey* : It is carried out regularly at six monthly intervals and data so collected is used for compilation of General Index.

10. *Survey of Labour Conditions* : 61 surveys have been conducted in 59 industries (including repeat surveys in 2 industries).

11. *Contract Labour Survey* : 38 surveys have been conducted in 35 industries (including repeat surveys in 3 industries).

12. *Consumer Price Indices for Industrial Workers, Agricultural Labourers and Rural Labourers* are being compiled and published on monthly basis.

13. *Retail Price Index for 21 essential commodities* are being compiled on monthly basis.

14. *Wage Rate Index* are being compiled on annual basis : Index of all 21 industries has been published for 1993 and compilation of index for 12 industries for 1994 has been completed.

15. *Productivity Index* : This index with base 1970-71 for 35 selected industries in manufacturing sector is being compiled. The index has been completed upto the year 1988-89.

16. *Labour Statistics* : Data collected through returns under various labour laws has been published in Indian Labour Journal (Monthly), Indian Labour Year Book (Yearly), Indian Labour Statistics etc.

17. *Research* : Fourth issue of Statistical Profile on Women Labour 1993 has been released and fifth issue is under finalisation. Sixth issue of Digest of Labour Research in India has been brought out and seventh issue covering 1993-96 is under preparation.

[Translation]

Workers in Slate Pencil Industry

5069. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the labourers working in Slate-Pencils Industry in Mandsaur district of Madhya Pradesh become victims of silicosis disease;

(b) whether this disease leads to slow death; and

(c) if so, the preventive steps taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c) The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) is aware of insured persons

working in the slate-pencil industry of Mandsaur district of Madhya Pradesh suffering from Silicosis disease. Silicosis is an irreversible, chronic and progressive disease which may lead to slow death over a period of time. For workers covered under the provisions of the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948, necessary provisions have been made for their diagnosis, keeping them under observation and their further investigation and treatment. Those who are found to be suffering from permanent disablement are examined by a Special Medical Board for the purpose of assessing the extent of disability and award of compensation. ESIC Corporation is paying additional benefits in the event of disablement arising out of occupational disease in the same scale as in employment injury. Cases which are suspected to have contracted occupational diseases are investigated for confirmation of diagnosis assessment of functional disablement and award of loss of earning capacity by the Special Medical Board constituted by ESIC with all India jurisdiction. For early detection and diagnosis of occupational disease the Corporation has set up 4 zonal Occupational Diseases Centres, one each at Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Calcutta. Health measures required to be taken to check such diseases have also been laid down in the Factories Act, 1948 and the rules framed thereunder. All industrial establishments are expected to follow the same.

Child Labour in CPWD

5070. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN :
SHRI LINGARAJ VALYAL :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether National Human Rights Commission has recommended stern measures to prevent the Government Servants from employing children below the age of 14 years are domestic servants;

(b) whether the Government are aware that many child labourers are provided employment under the contract system in a number of Government offices and C.P.W.D. Enquiry Offices in Delhi/New Delhi, where such child labourers are always found employed by Contractors for CPWD work such as white wash and other day to day affairs; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Essar Investment

5071. SHRI UTTAM SINGH PAWAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the Essar Investment which has already acquired 80% of Sterling Computer Ltd. has now made an open offer to public for acquiring the balance of 20% equity;

(b) whether the Essar Investment had decided to

acquire the 20% share at the rate of Rs. 532 per share as against the SEBI determined rate of Rs. 218 per share;

(c) if so, whether the said company have made public announcement in this regard as required under Section 40B of the listing agreement; and

(d) if not, what action the Government propose to take against these companies ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) SEBI has informed that Essar group of companies having acquired 80% of Sterling Computers Ltd. made a public offer in February, 1997 to acquire upto 20% of the equity capital of Sterling Computers Ltd.

(b) The offer price of Rs. 532 per share as determined by the acquirer was more than the price that could have been fixed under SEBI (Substantial Acquisition of Shares and Takeovers) Regulations, 1997. The higher rate was in the interest of investors.

(c) The public announcement of the offer was made on November 25, 1996.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

World Bank Aided Projects

5072. JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA :
SHRI NITISH KUMAR :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned 'IBRD flays tardy execution of highway projects', appearing in daily 'Observer' dated the April 23, 1997;

(b) if so, whether the audit mission of World Bank has stated that the projects being set up with the financial aid of World Bank are being delayed and their progress is unsatisfactory;

(c) if so, the reasons for such remarks made by the World Bank audit mission, and

(d) the reaction of the Union Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) the audit mission of World Bank has been holding discussions with the representatives of the Central and State Governments, contracting industry and consultants regarding the various issues leading to the delays in implementation of highway projects. The Bank intends thereafter to recommend suitable measures to the Government for reducing such delays in the implementation of future projects with World Bank loan assistance. The question of reaction of Central Government will arise only after the report of the World Bank is received.

[English]

Autonomy to J & K

5073. SHRI E. AHAMED : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government held any discussion with the Government of Jammu and Kashmir with regard to the autonomy proposed to be granted to the State Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) and (b) The Government in its Common Minimum Programme has stated that it is in favour of giving maximum autonomy to the State of J&K within the framework of the constitution of India. The State Government of J&K has set up a committee, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Karan Singh, to look into this issue. No report or proposals have, however, been received from the State Government so far. Hence the question of any discussions with the State Government in the matter is premature.

[Translation]

Labourers below the Poverty Line

5074. SHRI MOHAMMED ALI ASHRAF FATMI :
SHRI ILIYAS AZMI :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the conditions of unskilled labourers have not shown any improvement inspite of increase in their minimum wages and they are still living below the poverty line;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof;

(c) the norms being adopted by the Government to ascertain the people living below the poverty line;

(d) the State-wise estimated number of such people in the country; and

(e) the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (e) The estimates of poverty are not available separately for unskilled labourers. The incidence of poverty is based on the poverty line adopted by the Expert Group on Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor constituted by the Planning Commission which defined the poverty line at national level as monthly per capita consumer expenditure of Rs. 49.09 in rural areas and Rs. 56.64 in urban areas at 1973-74 prices corresponding to a basket of goods and services anchored on a norm of per capita daily calorie requirement of 2400 in rural areas and 2100 in urban areas. The Planning Commission estimates the incidence of poverty at national and state level based on the quinquennial survey data of consumer expenditure